

Teenagers' Attitudes on Marriage

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ABSTRACT

Marriage is social, spiritual, legal and holy union of males and females. It is strong bound to live life for each other and also continue their generations. For this purpose, different religious or holy books have mentioned different types of conventions and rituals to be performed during marriage. Now due to increase in education, many of the teenagers don't believe in performance of rituals and conventions. Hence, present study is made to explore the knowledge and aspirations of degree college students on marriage. Totally 170 boys and 150 girls studying in selected five degree colleges in Kalaburagi city were surveyed to collect the primary data through questionnaire. It is found that, gender inequality and dowry practice are main problems attached to the institution of marriage. Hence, it is suggested to overcome these barriers which have become social evils. For this purpose, there is need include the laws framed against dowry and gender inequality in curriculum at education and teachers have to impart knowledge on these issues.

1. Introduction

Marriage is a social, spiritual, or legal union of individuals. This union may also be called matrimony, while the ceremony that marks its beginning is usually called a wedding and the married status created is sometimes called wedlock. Marriage is a social, spiritual, or legal union of individuals. This union may also be called matrimony, while the ceremony that marks its beginning is usually called a wedding and the married status created is sometimes called wedlock. It is noted that the marriages are arranged on the social and religious cultures of the religions and caste. Further, it is also noted that the age of marriage is also fixed on the basis of the social conventions, traditions and law of the particular country or religion. In India, the marriage is considered as holy or spiritual union of two individuals of different sex so as to understand and share their ideas in different aspects of life.

Bishop (1984) stated that Marriage can be understood as an institution designed to solve sexual moral hazard by transferring to a husband the right of sexual control over his wife. Typically, this transfer is socially recognized at the formation of a marital union in a public wedding ceremony. Social recognition is reinforced by conventions such as the wearing of a wedding ring by the wife, the changing of her family name to correspond to that of her husband, modifying her title (from Miss to Mrs.) or, in traditional China, changing her hairstyle to indicate marital status. Such customs function to advertise a woman's sexual unavailability to other men as her husband has the right of exclusive sexual access. This is the message of those models which interpret marriage as a costly signal to screen out potential partners who are not willing to offer sexual exclusivity and commitment (Rowthorn, 2002).

A marriage is usually formalised at a wedding or marriage ceremony. The ceremony may be officiated either by a religious official, by a government official or by a state approved celebrant. There is more recognition for religious marriage in India, which is prohibited in few countries. Religious marriage involves conventions such as applying

turmeric, inviting all family friends and relatives, worship to family deities, Mangal Sutra, etc. On the other hand, in India, civil law has also become popular and it is 'Register Marriage' which is performed officially at the offices of Sub-Registrar. Now, it is essential to know whether the present educated teenagers believe in marriage conventions and laws. Hence, the present study is made to look into the attitudes of teenagers on marriage in Kalaburagi city.

2. Aims and Objectives of the Study

The present study is made to know about the ideas of marriage as religious social conventional among the teenagers. The study is also aimed to look into whether the educated teenagers believe in conventions related to marriage. The efforts also made to know whether teenagers are aware about child marriage and dowry.

3. Sources and Methodology

The author searched for published literature on marriage and conventions related to marriage in different countries. Based on the same, questionnaire was prepared to collect the primary data through survey of teenagers studying in degree colleges. Totally five-degree colleges in Kalaburagi city are visited by author to collect the primary data. The collected primary data is analysed, interpreted and discussed as under:

4. Analysis and Discussion of Primary Data

The collected primary data from the present study is analyzed and discussed as under.

1. Gender-wise distribution of Respondents:

Gender of the students also plays an important role in determining the marriage related issues. It is observed that, the girls' participation in graduation is also low compared to the boys. The gender of the students covered under the present study is shown in the following table.

Table No. 1. Gender-wise distribution of the Respondents

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Male	170	53.12
Female	150	46.87
Total	320	100

Of the total 320 Degree students covered under the present study, 170 (53.12%) are boys and the remaining 150 (46.87%) are girls.

2. Religion of the Students:

The religions and caste are important factor in deciding the Marriage customs and rituals. The author collected information from the students of different religions, so as to know about their caste and religion background and their ideas on the marriage. Hence, the information on the religion of the students under the present study was collected and presented in the following table.

Table No. 2. Religion of the Respondents

Particulars	Male		Female		Total	
	No's	%	No's	%	No's	%
Hindu	106	62.35	93	62.00	199	62.19
Muslim	39	22.94	29	19.33	68	21.25
Christian	11	6.47	15	10.00	26	8.12
Any Other	14	8.24	13	8.67	27	8.44
Total	170	100	150	100	320	100

Of the total 320 students covered under the present study, 199 (62.19%) are from Hindu religion, followed by 68 (21.25%) are Muslims, 26 (8.12%) are Christians and the remaining 27 (8.44%) are belongs to other religions such as Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs, etc.

3. Caste of Students:

The present deals mainly with the attitudes of degree students towards marriage. The marriage rituals change as per their castes. Hence, there is need to know about the caste of the respondents. The information collected on the caste background of the students covered under the present study is shown in the following table.

Table No. 3. Caste of Students

Particulars	Male		Female		Total	
	No's	%	No's	%	No's	%
Scheduled Caste	39	22.94	36	24.00	75	23.44
Scheduled Tribe	08	4.71	04	2.66	12	3.75
Other Backward Caste	97	57.06	82	54.67	179	55.94
Others/Forward Caste	26	15.29	28	18.67	54	16.87
Total	170	100	150	100	320	100

The caste of all the students disclosed that,75 (23.44%) of the respondents are belongs to scheduled castes, 12 (3.75%) are belongs to scheduled tribes, 179 (55.94%) are belongs to other backward classes including minorities and 54 (16.87%) are belongs to others or forward castes.

4. Parents urge for Early Marriage:

In many families, the parents urge for early marriage of their sons and daughters. In case of daughters, it is common observation that the girls' marriage is the responsibility of the parents. Further, in the case of families having only one son, their parents also urge for the early marriage of their sons. In this respect, it was asked to the Degree students that whether their parents are urging for the early marriage. The collected data is presented in the following table.

Table No. 4. Parents urge for Early Marriage

Particulars	Male		Female		Total	
	No's	%	No's	%	No's	%
Yes	31	18.23	96	64.00	127	39.69
No	139	81.76	54	36.00	193	60.31
Total	170	100	150	100	320	100

Of all the students surveyed, 127 (39.69%) have expressed that their parents are urging them to marry at an early age, whereas the remaining 193 (60.31%) are stated that their parents are not urging for early marriage.

5. Marriage should be arranged as per wish of Parents:

Marriage is social custom, which involves the personal interest of the boys and girls, who are going to marry. Because, they have to live longer life together. In this respect, it is needed to know about each other and parents from both sides should be known to each other. There are also inter-caste and love marriages, for which there is no acceptance from parents to a greater extent. In India, the marriages are done as per the wish of parents and boys and girls who are going to marry. In this respect, it was asked to the degree students that whether the marriages should be arranged as per wish of their parents and the collected responses are tabulated as under.

Table No. 6. Marriage should be arranged as per wish of Parents

Particulars	Male		Female		Total	
	No's	%	No's	%	No's	%
Yes	107	62.94	119	79.33	226	70.62
No	63	37.06	31	20.67	94	29.37
Total	170	100	150	100	320	100

Surprisingly, it is highlighted that,only 226 (70.62%) of the students have clearly agreed that marriage should be arranged as per the wish of their parents, whereas 94 (29.37%) have not agreed to the same.

7. Knowledge about Marriage and Marital Relations is needed before Marriage:

Marriage is personal and holy relation between husband and wife. For this purpose, there is need to know about the marriage and marital relations, before marriage of every person. It was asked to the respondents whether the knowledge about the marriage and marital relations is needed for every person before his/her marriage and the collected information is presented in the following table.

Table No. 7. Knowledge about Marriage and Marital Relations is needed before Marriage

Particulars	Male		Female		Total	
	No's	%	No's	%	No's	%
Yes	170	100	150	100	320	100
No	--	--	--	--	--	--
Total	170	100	150	100	320	100

It is interesting to note that all the respondents have agreed that before marriage, there needs to get sufficient knowledge about the marriage and marital relations.

8. Decision Making on Partner Selection for Marriage:

Marriage is personal decision and each person (boy or girl) have to decide about his/her marriage. For this purpose, there is essential that boy and girl who is going to marry should know about each other and approval from both sides. Further, such marriage should be recognized by the society as the married couples are living in the society. Above all approval of parents from both sides is necessary for marriage. For this purpose, the parents of the boys or girls play an important role in deciding about the partner selection for their boy or girl for marriage. It was asked to the respondents that who has to make the decision related selection of partner to marriage. The collected information is furnished in the following table.

Table No. 8. Decision Making on Partner Selection for Marriage

Particulars	Male		Female		Total	
	No's	%	No's	%	No's	%
Parents of Boys and Girls	21	12.35	09	6.00	30	9.37
Boys/ Girls (Marrying)	17	10.00	18	12.00	35	10.94
Both of the Above	116	68.23	93	62.00	209	65.31
Friends and Relatives	08	4.71	11	7.33	19	5.94
All of the Above	08	4.71	19	12.67	27	8.44
Any Other	--	--	--	--	--	--
Total	170	100	150	100	320	100

On partner selection for marriage, 30 (9.37%) have stated that, only parents of boys and girls can make the decisions on partner selection for marriage, 35 (10.94%) have agreed that only boys or girls can make decisions for their marriage, 209 (65.31%) have stated that both parents of both sides along with boys and girls can make decisions pertaining to partner selection for marriage, 19 (5.94%) have mentioned that the friends and relatives can make decisions on partner selection for marriage and 27 (8.44%) have expressed that all the persons such as parents, boys and girls marrying, friends and relatives can make decision together for partner selection for marriage.

9. Adequate Freedom to Choose Partner for Marriage:

Above table explained about the decision making about selection of partner for marriage. In few families, much importance and freedom is not given while selection of partner for marriage. In this respect, it was asked to the respondents whether they have adequate freedom to choose partner for

marriage in future in their family and the collected data is shown in the following table.

Table No. 9. Adequate Freedom to choose Partner for Marriage

Particulars	Male		Female		Total	
	No's	%	No's	%	No's	%
Yes	143	84.12	64	42.67	207	64.69
No	27	15.88	86	57.33	113	35.31
Total	170	100	150	100	320	100

Surprisingly, it is emphasized that,207 (64.69%) of the respondents expressed that they will be given adequate freedom to choose partner for marriage, whereas 113 (35.31%) are stated that such freedom to choose partner for marriage should not be given in their families.

10. Child Marriage in Family:

Marriages arranged for boys, of whose age below 21 years of age and girls of whose age below 18 years of age is considered child marriage and is illegal. Due to the illiteracy, religious conventions and social beliefs such marriages are arranged by the people especially in rural areas. It was asked to the respondents, whether there is any child marriage in their family. The collected responses are presented in the following table.

Table No. 10. Child Marriage in Family

Particulars	Male		Female		Total	
	No's	%	No's	%	No's	%
Yes	--	--	--	--	--	--
No	170	100	150	100	320	100
Total	170	100	150	100	320	100

All the respondents stated that no child marriages were arranged in their families so far.

11. Marriage related Social Conventions are Essential:

Marriage is a social function. Marriage is based on social conventions performed by the brides and grooms on the basis of their religious customs and traditions. A few of the youth do not believe in these conventions and traditions of the marriage. It was asked to the respondents whether they believe in these marriage related social customs and traditions and whether they are essential and the collected responses are tabulated as under.

Table No. 11. Marriage related Social Conventions are Essential

Particulars	Male		Female		Total	
	No's	%	No's	%	No's	%
Yes	124	72.94	138	92.00	262	81.87
No	46	27.06	12	8.00	58	18.12
Total	170	100	150	100	320	100

Of all the students surveyed, 262 (81.87%) are of the opinion that marriage related social conventions are essential, whereas the remaining 58 (18.12%) of the respondents feels that such conventions and traditions are not essential.

12. Support and accept Dowry at Marriage:

Dowry is a price paid by the parents of the bride to groom in marriage. The dowry may be in the form of cash, gold and equipment such as vehicles, electronic goods, etc. Dowry is a

social evil and it is banned by law. Still majority of the families support giving and taking the dowry in marriage. It was asked to the respondents that whether they support and accept dowry at marriage and the collected information is presented in the following table.

Table No. 12. Support and Accept Dowry at Marriage

Particulars	Male		Female		Total	
	No's	%	No's	%	No's	%
Yes	152	89.41	66	44.00	218	68.12
No	18	10.59	84	56.00	102	31.87
Total	170	100	150	100	320	100

Of all the students, 218 (68.12%) have agreed they support and accept dowry at marriage, whereas the remaining 102 (31.87%) of the students do not support and accept the same.

5. Findings, Discussion and Suggestions

It is found from the present study that, due to impact of education, there is increasing awareness among students on marriage and related conventions, rituals and practices. Surprisingly, it is found from the study that, though educated, majority of the students are supporting dowry at the marriage and even females are also supporting the same. Further, while selection of their partner for the marriage, females have lesser

freedom of choice. It shows that there is gender inequality in marriage conventions. Of course, majority of the students have agreed that marriage has to be decided by parents, bride and groom and even a few of them have agreed that there is approvals from parents, boy, girl, friends and relatives. It shows that, still they are following social culture as expressed from their religious and caste-based practices and conventions. It is suggested to the students to fight against gender inequality and practice of dowry. For this purpose, it is the duty of teachers to educate students to not follow such evil practices.

6. Concluding Remarks

Marriage is holy binding between husband and wife and to strengthen such bond, there is need for elders' blessings, rituals as per the social culture of different religions and castes, ideal age as specified by law, approval from parents, boy, girl, friends and relatives, marriage without dowry or gifts from bride's relatives, etc. For this purpose, each of the students must be get educated with laws pertaining to marriage as revealed from different religious conventions, Constitutional laws, welfare and well-being of both parties (bride & bridegroom), etc. In this regard, education is needed for both boys and girls especially during teenage. The curriculum must be designed to increase awareness of these issues and teachers should impart awareness on all these family and marriage issues to their students.

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